



Friday 23rd October 2026 Newsletter

Pūrākaunui School
*Growing curious, connected and
confident learners*

Principal's Message

Kia ora whānau,

Welcome back! It has been fantastic to see all of our tamariki return with such energy and enthusiasm. We have had a wonderful start to the term, and with so many exciting events and activities lined up over the coming weeks, there is a lot to look forward to!

You will be pleased to hear that we recently had a very positive review from the Education Review Office (ERO). They highlighted that we have some very lucky learners here at our school, noting our strong relationships with the children, their high level of engagement, and how well our tamariki know their own next learning steps.

A consistent focus for us this term is attendance, achievement, and engagement. Every day at school counts—being here regularly helps our learners stay connected, build strong friendships, and make steady progress in their learning journey. Thank you for your continued support in helping your children arrive ready to learn each day.

Reporting & Communication via HERO

This year, we are excited to share that we will be reporting student learning progress, publishing newsletters, and sharing regular learning snippets through HERO. HERO is a secure platform that keeps you right in the loop with your child's growth and everyday school life.

Getting set up on HERO is quick and straightforward!

Please follow these steps to log in:

1. Download the App: Search for "Hero by LINC-ED" in the Apple App Store or Google Play Store, or access it via a web browser at go.linc-ed.com.
2. Enter Your Email: Use the primary email address you provided to the school upon enrolment, then click Next.
3. Select "New User": Click on New User and select Submit to request your password link.
4. Set Your Password: Check your email inbox for a link from HERO. Click the link and follow the prompts to create your password.
5. Verify & Log In: Enter the 6-digit verification code sent to your email to complete your setup.

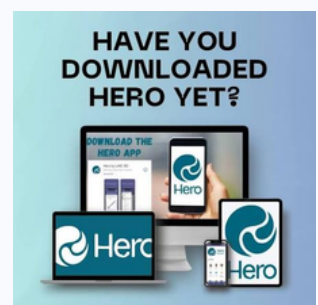
Note: If you do not receive the email within a few minutes, please check your spam folder or contact the school office so we can verify that we have your correct email address on file.

We encourage everyone to log in as soon as possible so you don't miss out on important updates, newsletters, or snapshots of your child's learning!

Kā mihi nui,
Mikaela Wilson
Principal



Mikaela Wilson
Principal



TERM 4 Calendar

- **Monday 26th October** Labour Day -SCHOOL CLOSED
- **1st November** Car wash Fire Station Waitati - fundraiser for their school camp
- **Tuesday 3rd November** Three Peaks Athletics Day Palmerston
- **Sunday 8th November** Whanau Family Fun Day
11:00 am -2:00 pm
- **Tuesday 8th -Wednesday 9th November** Overnight Leavers Camp Whareakeake
- **Wednesday 9th November** Beach Day & BBQ Whareakeake whole school
- **4th Monday - 15th Tuesday December** Whole School Overnight Camp & trip to the Marine Science Centre 1
- **18th December Friday** DAY 2026 Assembly End of Year Performances and Certificates, shared Kai
- **28th January 2027** START BACK

SWIMMING STARTS FRIDAY - Transport required to and from school to Port Chalmers Pool
Term 4 Swimming Details

- Location: Port Chalmers School Pool (5 Session Road, Port Chalmers)
- Days & Dates: Every Friday, starting 30 October through to 11 December (7 weeks)
- Timing: Friday afternoon 1:00 -2:00 (exact time slot to be confirmed)

Looking Ahead to Term 1

We are also planning ahead for Term 1, with swimming lessons tentatively scheduled from early February through to 26 March. More details on Term 1 will follow closer to the time, but please mark the Term 4 dates in your calendars!



2026 SWIM CLUB ONLINE REGISTRATION



<https://bit.ly/2026rego>

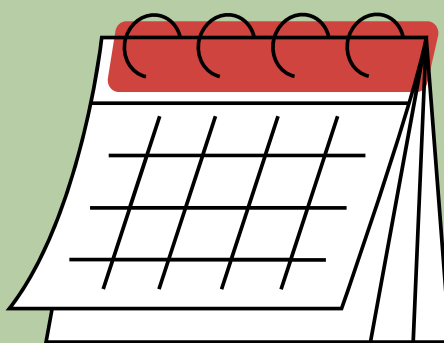
Swimmers 5+ years welcome to join
Contact: portswimclub@gmail.com



Follow us: Port Chalmers Swim Club
& stay up to date with club news and events

Learn-to-Swim Lessons ●
Development Squad ●
Competitive Squad ●
SwimFit Squad ●

PORT CHALMERS SWIM CLUB



*Save
the
Date*

HAVE YOU DOWNLOADED HERO YET?





Athletics Day Palmerston 3/11/26



Kia ora Families,

Here is all the key information for the upcoming Senior Athletics Day.

Key Details

Date: Tuesday, 3 November 2026

Location: East Otago High School (EOHS) grounds

Physical Address: 3 Stour Street

Palmerston 9430

Otago, New Zealand

Briefing: 9:45 am

Events Start: 10:00 am

Postponement/Cancellation:

If needed, a decision will be emailed to families by 8:00 am on the day.



Transport Needed: We will need help transporting students to and from East Otago High School. Please let us know if you can assist with driving children on the day.

Parent Volunteers Needed!

Our school is responsible for co-running the Boys Shot Put event alongside Macraes Moonlight School. We need parent volunteers to help supervise/run the event or assist with timing and lane marshalling. No prior experience needed—all equipment and instructions are provided!

What to bring: Full drink bottle, lunch/snacks, warm layers, and appropriate footwear.

Facilities: Toilets and a water refill station will be available in the DG Hall Foyer.

Safety: EOHS classes will be operating as normal, so students must stay strictly within the athletics field area at all times.

If you can help with transport or volunteering on the day, please reply to this email or get in touch with the school office as soon as possible.

Thank you for your support!



**Year 7 & 8 Leavers Special Overnight Camp
& Whole School Beach Day at Whareakeake
Tuesday 8th – Wednesday 9th November**

We have an exciting couple of days planned at Whareakeake to celebrate our Year 7 & 8 leavers and bring the whole school together!

This camp is a special opportunity to celebrate three amazing learners and leaders at our school: Millie, Lakoda, and Zavia. They have been an absolute delight to teach, and I know they will carry our school values out into the world and continue to do amazing things at high school next year. Next year, Lakoda and Zavia will be attending East Otago High School, and Millie will be heading to Otago Girls' High School.

Tuesday 8th November – Leavers Overnight Camp:

Our Year 7 & 8 students will head out to the Whareakeake campsite right after school with Mikaela to set up camp for their overnight adventure.

Wednesday 9th November – Whole School Beach Day & BBQ

On Wednesday, the rest of the school will head out to Whareakeake to join our leavers for a fantastic day by the sea. We'll be running hands-on science activities on the beach, followed by a shared BBQ lunch.

Cost: There is no cost associated with this trip.

More details regarding gear lists and timings for Wednesday will be shared closer to the time. Please let us know if you have any questions or if you plan on joining the Year 7 & 8s on Tuesday evening!





Term 4 Whole School Overnight Camp: Quarantine Island & Marine Science Centre

Monday 14th – Tuesday 15th December

We are super excited to wrap up the year with a whole-school overnight camp to Quarantine Island, along with an awesome visit to the Otago Marine Science Centre!

Cost: \$115 per student (covers boat transfers, accommodation, food, and all hands-on Education Outside the Classroom activities). If you would like some support with the cost, please reach out to us directly in confidence.

Parent Volunteer Needed: Mikaela and Sarah Wara will be accompanying the students, but we require one more adult helper to join us (though additional helpers are more than welcome!). If you are keen to join the adventure, please let us know as soon as possible!

Further details and packing lists will be sent out closer to the time.



SAVE THE DATE:

End of Term Assembly & Shared Potluck Dinner

Assembly at 4:15 pm

Friday 18th December | Dinner at 5:00 PM



Mark your calendars! We are excited to invite all of our whānau and school community to our End of Term celebration and shared potluck dinner.

4:15 PM Start: We will gather together to kick off the evening with a special presentation and student performances celebrating all the hard work and achievements of our tamariki this term. Children are welcome to stay afterschool to help prepare the stage and play.

Shared Potluck Dinner will begin at 5:00 PM: Following the performances, we will come together to share a delicious meal. Please bring a plate of food to share with the community!

More details and formal invitations will be sent out closer to the time, but please lock this date into your diaries—we can't wait to celebrate the end of the year with you all!



Dear Pūrākaunui School Families,

We are getting ready for our upcoming Whānau Fun Day—our main school fundraiser for the year! As a small school community, we rely on everyone coming together to make events like this a success. We are asking every family to please lend a hand to ensure it's a wonderful day for our tamariki and guests.

Here is how you can help:

1. Baking Contributions

We are asking each family to kindly donate one dozen sweet or savoury items that are easy to pop onto a plate for our café.

Examples: Cupcakes, slices, scones, scrolls, bliss balls, etc.

Important: Please include a clear list of ingredients with your baking to protect community members with food allergies.

Drop-off: Please bring your baking to the school by 9:45 AM.

2. Helpers & Volunteers Needed

To run our activities smoothly, we urgently need volunteers for the following roles:

Raffle Ticket Sellers: Helping us sell raffle tickets throughout the event.

Bouncy Castle Monitoring: Supervising the bouncy castle to keep the kids safe.

Games Organiser: Running fun traditional races like egg-and-spoon, sack races, and wheelbarrow races.

Creative Competitions Setup & Supervision: We are running a Recycled Junk Sculpture Competition and a Coloring-In Competition.

Mikaela has all the resources ready, but we need helpers to set up the spaces, supervise, and ensure students write their names clearly on their entries.

We have incredible prizes lined up, including Moana Pool passes and a trip on the Taieri Gorge Railway! We want to encourage the children to do their best work with a bit of guidance.

3. Run Your Own Stall!

If you would like to set up and run your own stall during the event, you are very welcome to! We ask for a \$10 contribution towards the school for each stall. Please let us know in advance if you'd like to reserve a space.

4. Spread the Word & Join Us!

Invite your friends, whānau, and neighbors to come along!

Enjoy tea, coffee, and delicious café treats accompanied by beautiful views on the hill.

Our pizza oven will start serving hot pizzas starting at 11:00 AM.

Thank you all so much for your continued support, generosity, and community spirit. Please let us know as soon as possible where you can help out or if you would like to run a stall!

Warm regards,

The School Team

Certificates



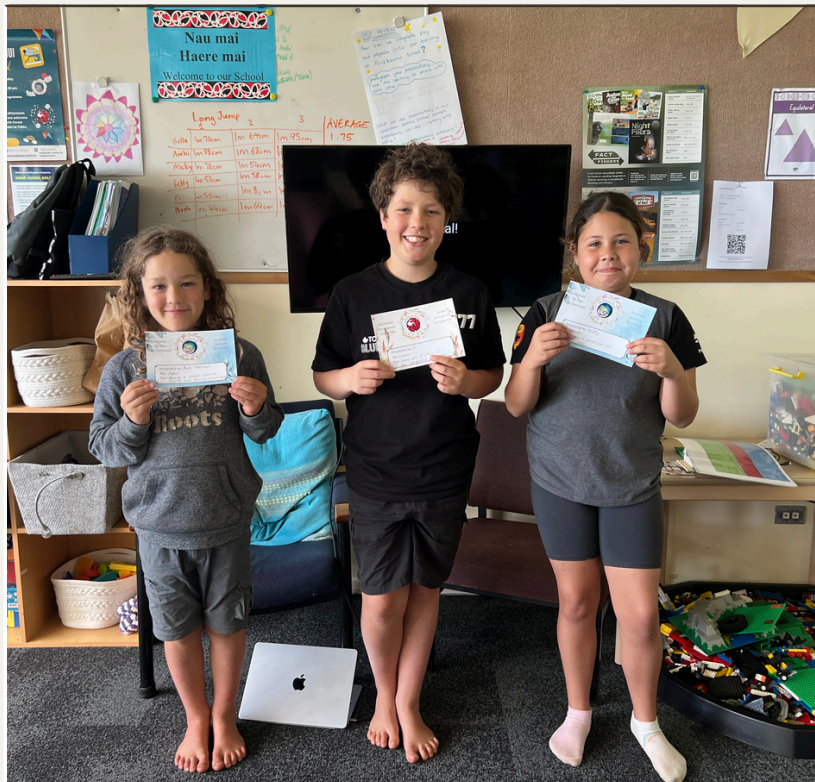
Awhi - Manawanui Award for having a settled start to Term 4 and focusing on your mahi.



Micky- Manawanui Award for coming to school even on hard days.



Pi- for being kind and supportive to others in the playground and the classroom.





SCHOOL YARD SCOOP



Kia ora whānau, hello everybody

WRITING

We have been learning how to write a letter for writing. In our letters, we have also been making sure we use paragraphs and use correct punctuation in it as well.

Year 0-3 students have been trying to do 1-2 paragraphs in their writing. For tamariki in year 4-6, they have been trying to do 3-4 paragraphs. For students in year 7-8, they have been trying to do 4-6 paragraph in their writing. Hopefully you have seen some letters we have written coming home.

MATH

During math, we have been learning how to read time and do conversions like pounds into kg; also, we have also learnt about measurement.

READING

We have been reading Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone with Mikaela, but with Mrs Penn (Sophie) we have been reading The People of Sparks, which is the 2nd book of the City of Ember which we read last year.

LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Last week Lakoda and Zavia went to a first-aid course. At the first-aid course, we learnt baby CPR and how to stop a baby from choking

PLAY GROUP CLOSED

26 Oct Labour Day

3 Nov Athletics

14 - 15 Dec Camp



Rediscovering my passion: a week of science, sea and sanctuary



Like our tamariki, I love literacy and maths most when I use them for something I'm passionate about. For me, that's environmental science, alongside creativity and art. A week on BLAKE Inspire for Teachers in Auckland, which carries on Sir Peter Blake's environmental legacy, reminded me how much. From 8am to 9pm each day, I learned alongside 35 teachers, scientists, educators and documentary makers.

A University of Otago marine educator taught us Marine Metre Squared, where you count the life in a 1m x 1m patch of shore at low tide to track change over time. Pūrākaunui School will try it this term, staying on Quarantine Island / Kamau Taurua and visiting the Marine Studies Centre at Portobello. We also tested streams using the "5 Cs": cool, clear, current, clean and critters. Finding mayflies, caddisflies and stoneflies means a stream is healthy.

We explored bush invertebrates with Christchurch's "Bug Man" and an Auckland Council biodiversity specialist. We studied climate data with Earth Sciences New Zealand (formerly NIWA), and played lobbyists, discovering how hard it is to run a country! A marine scientist showed us how creativity drives science, and we sculpted clay rocky-shore creatures, each with the adaptations it would need to survive.

Business can be part of the solution too. Sawmill Brewery in Matakana was New Zealand's first B Corp-certified brewery. It sends less to landfill each week than a typical household and plants trees with the Forest Bridge Trust. At Beetopia on the Matakana Coast, we walked through native forest learning about ngaro huruhuru, our 28 native bee species. They are tiny, solitary, ground-nesting and found nowhere else in the world, and planting flowering natives helps them thrive.

We also visited Weymouth Primary School in South Auckland, whose garden to table and recycling programmes were incredible. Their garden is woven right through the curriculum, from science and sustainability to Matariki, when the whole school harvests and cooks food from the garden together. Seeing tamariki turn food scraps and recycling into thriving gardens and shared kai gave me plenty of ideas to bring home.

It made me proud of the work our own tamariki at Pūrākaunui School have been part of, growing and harvesting food in our school garden. Our chicken coop and community pantry are nearly finished, and I'm crossing my fingers that kunekune pigs might be next! It was also inspiring to hear from other educators about how forest play builds resilience.

Climbing, building huts, getting muddy and working through challenges together in the bush helps children grow confidence and persistence that carry back into the classroom.

Not all tamariki live as ours do, beside an ecosanctuary, an estuary, the sea and beautiful hills and bush. BLAKE's NZ-VR programme brings the ocean to every child. Wearing virtual reality headsets, students compare thriving and damaged marine ecosystems and learn how to show kaitiakitanga. It has reached more than 50,000 young people. It reminded me how fortunate our children are, and why we must teach them to care for this place.

At Tāwharanui, New Zealand's first integrated open sanctuary, farming, recreation and conservation sit side by side behind a pest-proof fence, next to a marine reserve. Kiwi, pāteke and kākā have returned, and at night kiwi run free. The co-founder of Young Ocean Explorers left us with a simple message: healthy sea, healthy people.

I met people from health, forest, nature and French charter schools, and from Dunedin's own Logan Park. The hospitality was outstanding and the days were packed. I came home inspired to teach what I love, and I'd recommend BLAKE Inspire to every teacher.





BLAKE INSPIRE
ENVIRONMENTAL
LEADERSHIP FOR
TEACHERS



Wonderful professional
development

Learning opportunities

On Tuesday last week we got to school early to head into Kings High School to experience Science Alive!

We watched two shows where they showed us quick fire demonstrations on different types of science. Hamish and Basil were lucky enough to be chosen to be demonstrators in front of everyone. Between the shows we got to wander around and interact with different science displays. Noah especially enjoyed all the space activities.



Athletics is coming up which means practice has started! This has been a little tricky as we don't have much athletics gear but we have been making do. Indoor long jump has been especially fun with all of us already showing improvements.



Last week we got to do a bit on unplugged coding - which means coding without a device. We had to give our partner instructions to follow - it was quite funny.